



# Michigan Municipal Electric Association

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Baraga

Bay City

Charlevoix

Chelsea

Clinton

Coldwater

Croswell

Crystal Falls

Detroit

Dowagiac

Eaton Rapids

Escanaba

Gladstone

Grand Haven

Harbor Springs

Hart

Hillsdale

Holland

L'Anse

Lansing

Lowell

Marquette

Marshall

Negaunee

Newberry

Niles

Norway

Paw Paw

Petoskey

Portland

St. Louis

Sebewaing

South Haven

Stephenson

Sturgis

Traverse City

Union City

Wakefield

Wyandotte

Zeeland

Michigan Editorial Editors,

Recent news of the tragic death of an elderly utility customer in Bay City has prompted serious questions from people across the state about how municipal electric companies manage power shut-offs due to the non-payment of electric bills.

This is an important issue for municipal electric companies, and for the customers we serve. We are saddened and troubled by what took place in Bay City. We will make no attempt to excuse it, and we are very determined to learn from it.

The Michigan Municipal Electric Association Board of Directors is calling for our 40 members to carry out an immediate, comprehensive review of the policies and procedures that govern their use of power shut-offs, and to swiftly make any changes needed to prevent future occurrences of this kind.

The stark reality is that every municipal electric company struggles with maintaining the fiscal integrity of the public utility while making sure that adequate power is provided to our most vulnerable customers.

It is essential that our members remain constantly vigilant about how effectively they maintain that balance. That responsibility is shared by leaders who manage them, and by the independent directors and municipalities that govern them.

MMEA members strive to ensure that our most vulnerable customers are protected. Our members' decades-long record of outstanding safety would attest to this fact.

However, there is no room for complacency; we must now look critically at those measures, strengthen them where possible and add to them where needed.

Notwithstanding our commitment to local decision-making, MMEA is confident that municipal utilities will work together to adopt a standard policy on this issue.

It is important to remember that municipally owned electric companies are responsible for operating in the best interests of the communities they serve.

We are committed to addressing this issue seriously, so that we can protect our most vulnerable customers and move our legacy of service forward.

We look forward to working with Governor Granholm, Attorney General Cox and our elected legislators, including Senator Barcia, and Chairmen Mayes and Patterson, who are promptly and appropriately devoting committee time to this issue.

Sincerely,

Jim Weeks  
Executive Director  
Michigan Municipal Electric Association